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Word From On High: Morgenthau for Gov.

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By DICK LEE

By a remarkable coincidence, Mayor Wagner, the foe of bossism, returned from his Tuesday session with President Kennedy in Washington completely convinced that Democratic delegates to be elected Sept. 6 will nominate young U. S. Attorney Robert Morgenthau for governor in the Sept. 17 state convention at Syracuse.

In addition, the Mayor, who says he is all for a "free and open convention," would not be bowled over if those yet-to-be-elected delegates gave Morgenthau a running mate in the person of James B. Donovan, Brooklyn lawyer, as a candidate for U.S. Senator.

Peculiarly enough, this would give New York Democrats the desired combination of a Jew and

an Irish Catholic with which to oppose Gov. Rockefeller and Sen. Jacob Javits and at the same time a lineup made up of proteges of Attorney General Robert Kennedy.

Son of Ex-Treasury Head

Morgenthau, 43, son of the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau Jr., was one of Robert Kennedy's proudest choices. As head man in the Southern District's federal law office, he is regarded at Washington as one of the foremost law enforcers on the Kennedy team.

When the Attorney General came to New York to set up a Citizens' Committee for Kennedy in the 1960 campaign the first one he turned to was young Morgenthau. It was that committee that led to the Kennedy Administration split with the Democratic organization, then headed by National Committeeman Carmine DeSapio and former State Chairman Michael H. Prendergast.

Donovan is a virtual newcomer to politics. He first came to public attention in February when he brought about the release of U-2 Pilot Francis Gary Powers. Who in the Kennedy administration gave Donovan that assignment was never made clear. Only last week he drew another job—this one from the Attorney General. It involves the release of the Cuban invasion prisoners.

Had Denied Ambitions

Donovan, who had earlier been mentioned casually as a possible candidate, declared himself in on the senatorial contest when he was asked about the Cuban mission. Although he had previously denied such ambitions, he admitted that he was in touch with Democratic leaders.



Robert Morgenthau



James B. Donovan

the possibility of his "contributing to party unity by becoming a Senatorial candidate."

On the Mayor's return from

Washington, he immediately arranged a meeting at the Commodore Hotel with Democratic State Chairman William H. McKeon and three county chairmen, John English of Nassau, William Luddy of Westchester and Peter Crotty of Erie, who had been leaning to Queens District Attorney Frank O'Connor for governor.

"He didn't play the boss to the extent of a flat statement that the Morgenthau word had come down from on high, but his beating around the bush didn't leave much doubt that Morgenthau nomination was in the works," reported one of the participants.

Costikyan Stays Away

Tammany leader Edward Costikyan, who originally proposed Appellate Justice Bernard Botein as the ideal Jewish opponent for Gov. Rockefeller, who did well with the Jewish vote four years ago, was invited but did not show up. Apparently Costikyan already knew that Botein was sidetracked. The boom for Botein obviously had been launched originally in reference to the Democratic patriarch, former Sen. Herbert H. Lehman. Justice Botein was a Lehman protege but the former Senator will no doubt agree to the rearranged program. The Lehmans and the Morgenthaus are related.

Now the question arises as to

the attitude of the so-called reform bloc of delegates toward nominations decided upon even ahead of the election of delegates. Only yesterday Arnold Fein, chairman of the reform group, which will have a substantial number of delegates after the Sept. 6 primary, warned that the

reform delegates would oppose anything smacking of bossism.

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